

Appl. No. 10/803,596
Amdt. Dated 02/17/05
Reply to Office Action of 11/17/04

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 10 to read as follows:

--Now referring to FIGS. 10 and 11, a support mechanism for assisting to maintain the gimbal section at a substantially stable position during operating conditions is secured to the water vehicle transom and the gimbal section respectively. Such a support mechanism is selectively operable independently of the control mechanism and includes a lower vertical housing stabilizer 96 including a U-shaped metal bracket 97 having sufficient size and strength to support the thrust of the propeller 58. Of course, such a U-shaped bracket 97 can be modified to accommodate the diameter of the lower vertical housing 47. Bracket 97 preferably engages the front of housing 47 and extends rearwardly therefrom where it joins mounting bracket 98. A mounting bracket 98 having a plurality of elongated support members are connected thereto and extend forwardly therefrom for being secured to the boat transom via a plurality of corresponding mounting flanges 99, as perhaps better shown in FIG. 2. Such a mounting bracket 98 diverges outwardly and forwardly from bracket 97 for assisting to maintain the propeller 58 at a substantially stable position during operating conditions. Advantageously, the U-shaped bracket 97 has a front portion offset above a horizontal plane so that the propeller 58 can be effectively pivoted between raised and lowered trim positions.--

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Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 23 to read as follows:

Now referring to FIGS. 5-7, the support mechanism further includes a trim plate assembly 69 including a pair of U-shaped semi-circular bearing retainers 71, 72 and a substantially planar metal trim plate 73 with an arcuate portion corresponding to the shape of the bearing retainers 71, 72. Such bearing retainers 71, 72 include a series of bearings, which encircle the lower vertical housing 38. The inner bearing retainer 71 is mounted to a semi-circular seat provided by the trim plate 73.

Appl. No. 10/803,596
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The outer bearing retainer 72 is mounted to the trim plate 73 by a plurality of mounting flanges 74.—

Please add the following new paragraphs beginning on page 8, line 13, immediately preceding the paragraph which starts with "Referring to FIGS. 3 and 5":

-- Referring to FIGS. 2, 3 and 6, the present invention 10 further includes a trim plate 73 and a lower gimbal 29 oriented in a substantially vertical position. Such a lower gimbal 29 has a central point. A plurality of hydraulic cylinder shafts 79 are attached to the trim plate 73 in such a manner such that the lower gimbal 29 can be moved to a vertical position while the central point of the lower gimbal 29 remains at a static location. The lower gimbal 29 raises the lower horizontal housing 46 vertically away from a water surface for providing ground clearance when the water vehicle is out of the water.

Still referring to FIGS. 2, 3 and 6, the lower horizontal housing 46 is operably connected to the lower gimbal 29 wherein small vertical movements of the lower horizontal housing 46 affect the attitude of the water vehicle when in motion. The present invention 10 further includes a steering gear 59 operably connected to the lower gimbal 29 in such a manner that the steering gear 59 can horizontally adapt the lower gimbal 29 while the central point of the lower gimbal 29 remains at a static location. The lower gimbal 29 is repeatedly rotatable along a path extending approximately 180 degrees defined between a forward position and a reverse position while the central point of the lower gimbal 29 remains at a static position.—

Please add the following new paragraph beginning on page 9, line 4, immediately preceding the paragraph which starts with "The flexible steering shaft 60".

-- Referring to FIG. 2, a control mechanism for generating a user input and directing the outdrive system to rotate freely in a select radial path so that the water vehicle can be propelled in a corresponding direction includes the following elements:

Appl. No. 10/803,596
Amdt. Dated 02/17/05
Reply to Office Action of 11/17/04

an electrical steering motor 65, a drive gear 64, a toggle switch 67, an electrical rudder position indicator 68, and a steering lock assembly 87. Referring to FIG. 9, such a control mechanism also includes a steering motor shaft 66 and a toothed gear 89 mounted thereon, a steering motor 88, a locking lever 90, a spring member 91, a pivot 92, a pivot pin 93, a spring loaded electro magnet 94, and amounting platform 95.--

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